

THE
S. PAULS
EXERCISE,
OR,
A SERMON OF
Conscience.

Describing the nature of it, and declaring
the manner and meanes how to obtaine,
and seraine, a good CONSCIENCE.

*Preached by JOHN HUGHES, Doctor
in Divinitie.*

2 COL. 1. 12.

*Our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our
Conscience.*

~~Printed by T. S. for Iohn Budge, and are to be~~

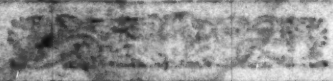
LONDON:
Printed by T. S. for Iohn Budge, and are to be
sold at his shop at the signe of the Greene Dragon
in Pauls Church-yard. Anno
Domi. 1632.

ST. PAUL'S
EXERCISE
OR
A SERMON
OF
Conscience


Declaring the nature of it, and declaring
the manner and means how to obtain
and preserve a good Conscience.

Preached by John Haveres, Minister
in Dartmouth.

2 COR. 1. 12
Conscience



LONDON:
Printed by T. S. for John Budge, and sold by
sold at his shop at the sign of the Green Dragon
in Pauls Church-yard, 1652.
T. S.


T O T H E R I G H T
Honourable, and Right Reuerend
Father in God, I O H N, Lord Bishop of
L I N C O L N E, Lord Keeper of the Great
Seale, and one of his Maiesties most Honou-
rable priuie Councell ; Grace and
peace in this life, and glorie in the
life to come.

Reaching, and Printing (Right Honourable) are excellent meanes to beget Faith, and to encrease Knowledge. The one (like a shower of raine) waters for the present ; the other (like Snow) lyes longer on the ground, and may speake when the Authour cannot : Having therefore preached diuers Sermons, I haue presumed to print this one, and to present the same unto your Honour, as a testimony of my service and dutie. My labour in this kinde, if it may doe good to any, and be accepted of your Lordship, it is the height of my desire. The matter hath beene handled by many : And, many more zealous and learned men I pray God to raise up daily to preach, & to write more of the same argument : for, beside the methode and manner of handling (which I also attribute to the grace of God, exciting

THE EPISTLE, &c.

and assisting me) I challenge nothing to my selfe but the faults,

Augst.

Mala mea sunt pure mala, & mea;
Bona mea nec pure bona, nec mea.

Your Lordship may claime a speciall interest in these lines, not onely in regard of the Authour, obliged vnto your Honour in many respects; but also of the matter, which is meere Chancery, and hath need of your patronage. For it is a common complaint that Conscience (for the most part of these latter yeares) hath lyne bed-rid & speecblesse: But blessed be God, that hath raised vp your Honour to be a Patrone to his Church, a Paterne of equity and Iustice in the Common-wealib, and a principall agent in these unconscionable dayes, to restore and recover conscience againe, where it was much decayed.

The same God that was the Authour of your preferment, continue his mercies, and multiply his blessings vpon your Lordship, that as the hearts of all good men (specially of vs Church-men) doe reioyce in your advancement; So I pray God wee may long enjoy your Honour, to the comfort both of Church and Common-wealib. Thus, craning pardon for my boldnesse, and favourable acceptance of these my endeauours, in most humble manner I recommend your Honour to the protection of the Almighty, euer resting

Your Honours most bounden

and dutifull Chaplaine,

IO: HUGHES.



ST. PAULS
EXERCISE,
OR,
A SERMON OF
Conscience.

ACTS 24. 16.

*And herein doe I exercise my selfe, to haue al-
waies a Conscience, voyde of offense to-
ward God and toward men.*



He very reading and hearing of
this Text may put vs in minde
of our duties ; doe but apply
it vnto your soules, and pra-
ctise it in your liues, and you
shall finde much comfort.

The maine matter of it is
Conscience ; a doctrine much neglected in our age,
and yet neuer more needfull. I will not trouble
you

The Preface.

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The coherence

you with any long discourse of the Context, for the words are plaine, and they containe part of S. Pauls Apologie before *Felix*, when *Tertullus* the Oratour accused him for a pestilent and a turbulent fellow. This Apologie consisteth of

two parts } *Negatio facti.*
 } *Confessio fidei.*

Verse 11.

1. A negation, or deniall of the fact, *They neither found me in the Temple, disputing with any man, nor in the Synagogues, or Citie, raising up the people.*

Verse 12.

2. A confession of his faith, *Non negat sed narrat; non dissimulat sed plane profitetur quam religionem coluit*, saith an Ancient vpon this Text; he doth not denie nor dissemble his religion, as many doe, but professeth plainely, that after that way which they call Heresie, so worshipped he the God of his Fathers.

Verse 14.

To this he addeth the ground of his faith, *beleeuing all things written in the Law and the Prophets.*

Verse 15.

And then the fruit of this ground, *Having hope towards God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the iust and vniust.*

And lastly, in the words of my Text hee setteth downie his practise and exercise: *And herein I exercise my selfe, to haue alwaies a conscience voyd of offence, &c.*

The sense of the Words.

As if he had thus spoken in *relo*, *Herein*, and for this respect, because I am a Christian, beleeuing the doctrine of the *Law* and the *Prophets*, and having hope in the Resurrection, *not* *now* I my selfe doe studie (as the *Rhemists* render it, or labour and endeavour, as *Trenclius* reads it, or exercise my selfe,

as the vulgar English hath it.

Where, by the way wee may obserue, that the ground-worke and foundation of a good conscience is Christian Religion, and a right beleefe concerning things diuine, specially the doctrine of the Resurrection, without the which the conscience cannot be good nor cleare.

For in this respect *S. Paul* saith, I labour and endeavour to haue and to hold a conscience, ἀπερσκα-
τον, cleare and voyd of offence in all duties towards God and men, and that alwaies. This I take to be the sence of the words, & their coherence with the precedent Scripture. The summe and substance whereof may be reduced to these three generall heads, whereof I will speake briefly.

1. Of Conscience, and the nature thereof, *Quid sit*? What it is? because many talke of it that know it not; And this is *Subiectum adaequatum*, the maine subiect, and as it were the Center of this Text.

2. *Quotuplex*: The kinds and qualities of Conscience, which are as lines drawne from the Center, to demonstrate and delineate the severall climates and regions of conscience; which are either offensive, or without offence; as the word *ἀπερσκατον* doth import.

3. The extent and latitude of this Text, call it what you will, the manner or meanes to obtaine and maintaine a good conscience; or the matters wherein, in all dutie humane and diuine, towards God and men; and the time how long, *παντοτε*, at all times. These are the lists and limits of this Text, and my intended Discourse; And of these
in

The Division.

The first part.

Aquin. part 1.
2. 79. Art. 13.Conscience
defined.The parts of
the definition
expounded.

Meditations.

in order ; but first of Conscience, and the nature thereof.

There are two things wherein man doth excell all mortall Creatures, $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Ratio,} \\ \text{Oratio.} \end{array} \right\} \begin{array}{l} \text{Reason,} \\ \text{and} \\ \text{Speech.} \end{array}$

Now Conscience doth belong vnto *Reason*, and is thus defined by *Aquinas* : *Affus rationis applicans scientiam ad opus* : An *act of reason*, applying our knowledge to our workes, and iudging of the lawfulnessse and vnlawfulnessse thereof. *Medina* saith, that it is, *Dictamen rationis applicatum ad opus* ; which is the same in effect. Some call it a *Habitus*, others a *Facultie* : But I decline the Casuists and Schoolemen of purpose, that I may speake to the people, and to their consciences : And therefore (according to plainenesse of speech, and soundnesse of truth) Conscience may thus be defined.

Conscience is a noble and a notable faculty in the soule of man, working vpon it selfe, and determining of all our particular thoughts, words, and workes, either with vs, or against vs.

1. I call it a *Faculty*, because it produceth acts, and is inseparable from its subiect; *Exui sed non depouipotesst*. It may be left off for a time in respect of the vse of it, as reason in a drunken man, but it cannot be cast off for ever, or removed from the soule. Which made *S. Bernard* to say, *Quocumq; modo conscientia mea inueni* ; Wherefoeuer I goe my conscience is with me, it dogs and followes mee ; *Adest vno sequitur mortuum*, It is present with me while I liue, and when I die it dyeth not ; for when my body

body is rotting in the grave, my conscience shall live : And when I rise againe, my conscience will come with me before God and his iudgement seat, either to excuse, or accuse me.

2. I call it noble and notable, in respect of the reciprocall working thereof, which is strange and admirable, and it is on this manner : First the minde thinkes a thought either good, or bad ; and then the conscience by doubling and reflecting the same, doth thinke againe of that thought, and iudgeth whether it be good, or bad. Wee have a good resemblance thereof in the eye, for the eye that seeth all things that may be scene, seeth not it selfe but by way of reflection, and the helpe of a looking-glasse; So it may be said of the minde, it mindes and vnderstands all things that may be vnderstood, yet it vnderstands not it selfe, nor its owne nature, but by recoiling, reflecting, & recollecting the beames & rayes of that diuine light in and vpon it selfe; which made some to say that Conscience is nothing else but *anima reflexa*, the soule of man recoiling, and reflecting vpon it selfe.

3. I place it in the Soule of man, not as part of a part, for *anima est indiuisa*, the soule is impartible; but *tota in tota*, wholly in the whole soule, and all the faculties thereof, where it keepeth a compleat Court, the Court of Conscience. In the vnderstanding where it principally resideth; *Bonorum malorumq. facinorum est Index & Index*; It sitteth as a Iudge determining and prescribing *de iure*, this may, or may not be done, and this is well or ill done. In the memory it is a Register, a Recorder, and a

Aristot.

Seneca.

Witnesse, *Qui nec fallis, nec fallitur*, which can neither deceiue, nor be deceiued, testifying, *de facto*, this was done, and that was not done; whereof the Poet speaketh,

Inuenat.

Nocte dieq. tuum gestas in pectore testem.

In the will and affections it is a layler, or executioner, easing or tormenting vs: For what are the approoves and reproofes, the ioyes and checkes of the conscience, but actions of the will and affections, recoiling vpon the Soule, either comforting, or tormenting vs for deeds past, or else terrifying vs for euill deeds to come? Which made one to compare it to a *bridle and a whip*, *Frenum ante peccatum, flagrum post peccatum*; A *bridle* to curbe vs before we sinne, and a *scourge* to whip vs after wee haue sinned.

Lips. Pol.

4. The fourth and last thing in the definition, is the Subiect or Obiect whereupon Conscience doth worke, or the matters wherewith it intermedleth. It medleth not with vniuersalities, as Arts and Sciences, nor with other mens matters, as busie-bodies doe; but it deales wholly and solely in our owne proper and particular actions. And of these it giueth iudgement by a kinde of reasoning and disputing in & with it selfe, called by the Schoolemen a *practicall Syllogisme*, whose *maior* is some maxime in Reason or Religion, which cannot be denyed; and whose *minor* is some act, fact, or dutie of ours, ill or well done, omitted or committed: And then followeth the *conclusion*, of it selfe either with vs, or against vs, as conscience beareth witnesse. Sometime it speaketh for God against vs; and sometime for

vs

vs vnto God, being as it were a middle ring, and an indifferent arbitrator betweene God and man, And it is called, *Conscientia, quasi cordis scientia*, saith S. Bernard, or rather, *Scientia cum alia*, a knowledge ioyned with our knowledge, whereby it knowes that of vs, which God onely knowes with vs. It is a co-witnesse with God, for no man knowes what is in man but God onely, & the spirit of man, which is his conscience; and this is *instar mille testium*, worth a thousand witnesses: Which made the Philosopher to say, *O te miserum si contemnis hunc testem!* O wretched man if thou despisest the iudgement and testimony of thine owne conscience!

The Fathers haue many sayings and similies to expresse the nature of Conscience. S. Bernard compares it to a Booke, *Conscientia est liber ad quem emendandum omnes scripti sunt libri*; Conscience is a liuing booke, annexed to the soule of man, indeed a power or faculty of the soule like vnto a Booke, for the informing and reforming whereof; all other bookes are written and printed; for what are all the Diuinity-bookes, and all the Law-bookes, but glosses and Commentaries vpon this Text? *Et maledicta glossa qua corrumpit textum*; Cursed is that law-booke, or glosse, that goes against Conscience.

This booke consisteth of two parts, or volumes; The one is a Law-booke, wherein are set downe the grounds and principles of truth, and equity, called by the Ancients *synthesis, sine relictarationis Scintilla*, the reliques and remains, or the records of the Law; and light of Nature. The other part is a *Chronicle*, or a *Registrie*, wherein all our workes are

M. Perkins,

Seneca lib. 2.
Epist. 43.

The nature of
Conscience
illustrated.
*De interiori
domo.*

M. Cade.

written; which made S. *Crysostome* vse the same comparison which S. *Bernard* long before: *Conscientia est codex in quo quotidiana peccata conscribuntur*; A booke wherein all our daily sinnes are written.

Now Conscience when it giueth iudgement, it first reades ouer the Law booke, and examineth what is written there, what is bidden or forbidden by the law of God, & nature: And then it turneth ouer the records, and seeth what is done or left vndone, and accordingly it giueth iudgement either with vs. or against vs.

S. *Origen* compares Conscience to a Schoolemaster, *Pedagogus anima sociatus, & affectuum corrector*, A Master or Monitor, to direct our wayes, and to correct our errors.

S. *Austin* to a looking glasse, *Speculo similis*, euen a cleare Christall glasse, wherein wee may see our owne vertues and vices, and behold the image of the inner man.

Tertullian calls it *praedictum extremi iudicij*, A fore-runner of Gods last iudgement, euen the best Almanacke in our owne breasts and bosomes, to foretell vs what shall become of vs at the last day.

These things I pray you to apply, for I cannot stand to amplifie: *These things if ye know, happye are you if you doe them*. In this learned age (amongst the innumerable bookes that are extant) I recommend vnto you the booke of Conscience, *Hunc lege, releges, & perlege*, O reade, reade often, and reade ouer this booke, and doe nothing against the Dictates thereof. It is not the want of knowledge, but of Conscience which the world complaineth

of:

of: many haue knowledge that want Conscience; And I wish from my heart that many had lesse Science, vpon condition they had more conscience. And so I come to the second part, the kindes and qualities of Conscience.

Conscience (according to my Text) is either *expansus*, cleare, guiltlesse, and without offence; or else, guilty, troubled, and offensive. The one is a Cordiall, the other a Corrosiue; the one a heauenly the other a very hell, euen in this life: Of the one *Salomon* speaketh, *A good conscience is a continuall feast, Iuge conuiuium*, a continuall Christmas, and a perpetuall Iubilee; whereof *S. Paul*, *Our reioicing is the testimony of our Conscience*; But the other is *anima Carnificina*, the racker and torture of the Soule; a very worme gnawing the heart at the roote, and compared to a very fiend or furie of hell, pursuing men with firebrands.

Conscience
two-fold.

Prou. 15. 15.

2 Cor. 1. 12.

S. Bernard hath a witty distribution of conscience

Conscience
four-fold.

into foure kinds,
 1. *Good, but not quiet.*
 2. *Quiet, but not good.*
 3. *Both good, and quiet.*
 4. *Neither good, nor quiet.*

The two good belong properly to the godly; and the two bad to the wicked, whose conscience is either too quiet, or too vnquiet.

I. The first kinde of Conscience is *good*, but not *quiet*. I call it good, not simply, but in respect of the tendernes of it, and fearfulness to offend; yet *vnquiet* for want of true light and information. Such is the conscience of those that are *erroneous* in iudgement; or ignorantly *dubious* and *scrupulous*, making

Good, but not
quiet.

Gal. 2. 12.
1 Tim. 1. 5.

making many quæries and questions for conscience sake, where God and his word makes none. They may be compared to a wilde and a wall-eyed horse, which stirres and starts at every shadow, without cause or occasion.

Such are many of my Brethren, both on my right, and left hand, I meane the Recusants in both kinds, Catholiques and Catharists, Papiists and Puritans, who are no lesse offended, the one with an egge on a fasting day; the other with a Cap, Crosse, or Surplesse, then with some hainous offence. I commend their zeale, but not their iudgement; their affection, not their discretion; they haue indeed a kinde of tendernesse of Conscience, but they want the right rule thereof, both which are required in a good Conscience. Their iudgement is weake and crazie, vnable to digest any hard matter, or difficult question: They mistake the grounds of Conscience, building vpon vnstable foundations, and burdening themselves and others with things in their owne nature indifferent.

Three degrees
of Conscience,
that is quiet, but
not good.

The second kinde of Conscience is *quiet*, but not *good*; and of this kinde there are three degrees,

{	<i>Caca.</i>	{	The <i>blinde</i> .
	<i>Secura, &</i>		The <i>secure</i> , and
	<i>Obdurata.</i>		The <i>feard</i> .

Caca.

1. The *blinde* and ignorant Conscience is quiet, because it knowes not how to stirre; the blind man swallowes many a flie, and the ignorant many a sinne; he sees and * discernes sinnes as we doe stars in a darke night, onely the great ones, *prima magnitudinis*, of the larger size. *Concupiscence*, the roote
of

M. Wards Balme
from Gilead.

of all euill, S. Paul thought to be no sinne, while the scales of ignorance were vpon his eyes. And so doe many ignorant men in their blinde Conscience thinke many a sinne to be no sinne: They thinke that a few heartlesse prayers, and *Lord haue mercy vpon vs*, at the last gaspe, will serue their turne: They dare not looke into the glasse of Gods holy Word, least the number of their sinnes, and the foulennesse of their soules, should affright them. But if God once open their eyes, as he did the Prophets seruant, they shall see whole armies, and legions of euils, and Diuels, in them, and against them.

The second degree is the *secure and carelesse*, the *sleepie*, and *drowsie Conscience*, that can and will not see, with whom sinne and Sathan are in league for a time, *Sed ista tranquillitas tempestas erit*, that calme in the end will proue a storme, as S. Ierom noteth. The flesh, the world, and the Diuell hath so lulled them a sleepe, that they neuer dreame of Heaven, nor Hell, death, nor iudgement, they neuer thinke of their sinnes, nor of the euill day; the noise of carnall pleasures, and the voyce of worldly profits doth drowne the voyce of Conscience in them, as the Drummes in the sacrifice of *Moloch* did the cry of the infants: Their *Conscience is quiet*, not because they be at peace, but because they are not at leisure. O thinke vpon this you that swim in worldly wealth and pleasures! O remember this you Polyphragmaticall men, that haue whole Mynes and Mints of businesse in your pates, making so much haste to be rich, that you are not at leisure once in a weeke, in a moneth, in a yeare, nay scarce in your whole

2. Secura.

Ad Heliodor.

whole life time to conferre with your poore Conscience, which is a very dangerous thing. For if euer this sleepey and drouisie Conscience doe awake, as many times it doth in the time of aduersity, as in *Iosephs* brethren, or at the houre of death, as in many others; like a wilde beast robbed of her whelpes, and rowled from sleepe, *Iugulum petis*, it will flie (as it were) to the throat of thy soule, accusing thee to the vttermost, and laying all thy sinnes to thy charge.

3 *Obdurata.*

The third degree is, the *fear'd* and *cankeriz'd* Conscience, which (by adding sinne to sinne) is so hardened, that it hath no sence nor feeling of sinne. The habite and custome of sinning hath taken away all *shame of face* and *remorse of Conscience* in many; that they are given ouer to a *reprobate sence*, to worke vncleanenesse with greedinesse. At the first euerly mans Conscience will speake vnto him, as *Peter* did to our Saviour, *Master, save thy selfe*; her pricke-arrows are like the shafts of *Ionathan*; to forewarne *Dauid* of the great Kings displeasure; but if we neglect her cry and calling, this good *Cassandra* will speake no more. That body is in great danger where the pulse doth not beate; that Armie is soone surprized, where the watch and alarme are not kept; So it is with that Soule, where the Conscience is not waking and stirring: *Gravissime agrotat qui se non sentit. moratare*, That man is desperately sicke that doth not feele his sickness; So is that soule that doth not feele his sinnes: *Tunc maxime oppugnari cum te nescis oppugnari*, saith *S. Ierome* to *Heliodor*, *Then art thou most tempted, when thou dost not feele thy*

thy temptations. And S. Austin asketh the question, *Quid miserius, misero non miserante seipsum?* What more miserable, then a wretch that seeth not his owne misery? O hearken vnto this you that harden your hearts, and feare your Consciences, by quenching the motions thereof, and sinning the rather when your Conscience is against it.

3. The third kinde of Conscience is that which is both good and quiet, which is very tender and sensible of sinne, and yet is neuer troubled nor perplexed, which is full of hope and loue, full of faith and knowledge, and which bringeth good tydings, and that vpon good grounds. This kinde of Conscience euer excuseth, and neuer accuseth, euer comforteth, and neuer condemneth; and if it hap to pricke and ake with sorrow for some sin past, that sorrow bringeth repentance neuer to bee repented of. Some there are that haue such Consciences, but very few in these our euill dayes, and they that haue them are happy and blessed both heere and hereafter.

Good and quiet.

4. The fourth kinde of Conscience is that which is neither good nor quiet, and this is the worst of all, for as the godly haue the first fruit of the spirit, and certaine tast of heavenly ioyes, euen in this life by the goodnes of their Conscience: So the wicked on the contrary do feele certaine flames and flashes of hell-fire, by reason of their guilty conscience; which made S. Bernard to say. *Nulla pena est grauior mala Conscientia qua proprijs agitur stimulis*: No plague, nor punishment more grievous then a guilty Conscience, which is tormented with a sting in it selfe, a worme;

Neither good nor quiet.

C

And

And a worme that euer gnaweth, and neuer dyeth. Such is the Conscience of wilfull and wicked murderers and malefactors; which despaire of Gods mercy, and oftentimes lay violent hands vpon themselves. *Polydor Virgil* writes, that *Richard* the third had a most terrible dreame the night before *Bosworth*-field, in which he was slaine: He thought that all the Diuels in hell haled and pulled him in most hideous and vgly shapes; *It credo non fuit somnium, sed Conscientia scelerum*, That was no fained dreame (saith *Polydor*) but a true torture of his Conscience, presaging a bloudy day to himselfe and to his followers. And we see by daily experience a great many that are driuen by the terror of a guilty Conscience to hang, drowne, and murder themselves; And of these it may be said that, *Iudas*-like, they are both *Iuris* and *Iudex*, *accusers* and *executioners* of themselves.

Thus you see the different kindes and qualities of Conscience, with the degrees and gradations thereof; Some too quiet, as the *blinde*, the *secure*, and the *seared*; and some too vnquiet, as the *erronious*, *dubious*, and *desperate*, or *guilty*: The meane is the best; not lulled asleepe with a habite of sinning, nor yet affrighted with the terrours of guilt and despaire, but well-seasoned with *feare* and *faith*, *hope* and *love*, which is the best temperature of a *Christian soule*. And so I come to the third and last part.

Part 3.

The extent, latitude, or circumference of this Text, (call it what you will) *the manner and means to obtaine and retaine a good Conscience*, or the matters wherein, in all duties towards God and men; and the

the time how long a good Conscience is to be kept,
διὰ παντός, alwayes, and at all times.

It is an Aphorisme in Physicke, that *isidem nutrimur quibus constamus*, wee are fed by the same whereof we are bred, whether we vnderstand it of bloud the immediate, or the earth the remote meanes of nutriment. And it is true in Diuinity, that the meanes to haue, and to hold, a good Conscience are alike, and the same. And these are prin-

Hippocrate.

cipally foure, *Universality of obedience.*
Sincerity of heart and affection.
Constancy in well-doing.
Diligence in practise, and exercise.

All which are closely included in the words of my Text.

I. First, to haue a good Conscience, there is required an *vniversall* and *Catholique obedience* in all duties humane and Diuine, towards God and men, the workes of Piety and Charity, in the first and second Table: For the conscionable man hath respect vnto all the Commandements of God, he intends not to breake any, although hee may faile in many; *Bona Conscientia non stat cum proposito peccandi*; *A good Conscience stands not with a purpose to sin.* He is no true penitent that mournes for sinne past, and at the same time meanes to commit the same sinne againe. He is no good man that makes conscience of one sinne, and not of another; so hee that breakes one Commandement, hates the rest, and is guilty of all. *Herod, Naaman, and Ananias*, made conscience of many sinnes, they went a great way towards Heauen, but for their Pride, Incest,

Obedience.

Lumbard.

Iam. 3. 10.

Idolatry, and Sacriledge, they were cast downe to Hell. Many there are that hate Pride and Couetousnesse, but they loue Whoredome and Drunkennesse. And somethere are that make a conscience of the duties of the first Table, specially those that crosse not their will and affections, that are no way against their profit and pleasure, and that are glorious before men; they will not misse a Sermon, sweare an oath, nor doe the least worke on the Sabbath day, which are very good things in them, for part of our endeanour, though it be not meere righteousnesse, yet is it lesse sinne. But as for the duties of the second Table, which are the best Touchstone of the Conscience, if we looke to their doings and dealings with men, you shall finde many of them full of fraud and falshood, full of malice and mischief, as if their holinesse were a discharge vnto them from righteousnesse. And others there are that liue orderly with their neighbours, and pay euery man his due, but they rob God of his due; they haue no care of the duties of the first Table, neither make they any Conscience of Religion. The first are like the *Pharises*, who were very *holy*, but *vnjust*; the others like the *Saduces*, good *liuers*, but very *bad belieners*, for they believed that there was neither *Spirit*, *Angell*, nor *Resurrection*. And of both these I may say, that they doe their duties by halfes, and *Agrippa*-like, they are but *semi Christians*, almost, or rather halfe Christians; whereas the conscionable man makes conscience of all the Commandements of God, euen from the greatest to the least, generally, though not equally; for

for most of all hee straines and strives against the great and grosse sinnes, yet swallowes not the least, hee abhorres adultery, and hates dalliance; He is so farre from pride, couetousnesse, and other capitall sinnes, that hee abstaines from all occasions and appearance of euill, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. In a word, he is a perfect Christian, *quoad partes* (as the Schoolemen speake) though not *quoad gradus*; as a Childe is said to haue all the parts of a perfect man, although he want age & stature; so the conscionable man hath all the parts and properties of a perfect Christian, which may be had here *in via, in the way*, although he attaine not those high degrees of perfection, which they haue *in patria*, in their Country.

1ud. 13.

2. Secondly, in a good Conscience there is required Sincerity, integritie, and vprightnesse of heart and affections, which the Greeke word *περς*, in my Text doth well import, if you change but the Case, and reade it thus, *before God & men*. All things are before God, and nothing is hid from him; yet properly that is said to be *before God*, which is hid from men, and which is before none but God only, as the heart and the conscience. God is *καρδιογρως*, the searcher of the heart, and tryer of the reines. And therefore he saith, *My Sonne giue me thy heart*. And S. Paul saith, *Whatsoeuer ye doe, doe it heartily, as vnto God, and not vnto men: For God is a spirit, and he will be serued in spirit and truth*. We cannot complement before God with faces and phrases, as we doe with men. A little done in sincerity and truth from the heart, is more worth then all the workes

Sincerity.

Prov. 23. 26.

Col. 3. 23.

Iohn 4. 14.

of

Matth. 6. 2.

Constancie.

2 Tim. 4. 10.
Gal. 5. 7.

of hypocrites ; yea, without this integrity of the heart all our labour is but lost. And therefore the Hypocrite, that sounds a Trumpet when hee giues almes, that prays in the corners of the street, and doth all his workes to be seene of men, can neuer please God, nor haue a good Conscience, for a good Conscience cannot stand with hypocrites.

3. Thirdly, to haue, and to hold, a good Conscience, there is required Constancie, Continuance, and Perseuerance in well-doing : Not *Demas*-like for a spurt, nor as the *Galathians* for a time, *Ye ranne well, who hindred you ?* But alwayes, and in the whole course of our life.

In the life of man there are many windings and turnings ; but the conscionable man, turne him loose, hee is not *bonus cum bonis, malus cum malis*, godly in one company, prophane in another ; sober to day, deboysh to morrow ; but like a square Cube, he is *semper idem*, euer the same, which way soeuer you turne him. There is not any, but at times haue fits and flashes of a good conscience : They are affected for the time present with some good Sermon, or vpon some great deliuerance they grow a little holy ; but that little is little worth, for they are soone out of breath, and quickly weary. And therefore my Text saith *ἀναπάντος*, alwaies, and at all times. It is true, that the best doe somerimes faile, the most faithfull haue their faults and frailties : Who can say, *My heart is cleane ?* In many things wee sinne all of vs ; But the godly, though they fall, yet shall they rise againe, and be renued by repentance ; they fall not finally, neither doe they sinne

sinne *pleno consensu*, with full consent, and bent of the will : Their will and desire is, yea, they are steadfastly purposed with *David*, to keepe all the Commandements of God ; And though they faile in many particulars, yet God accepteth their will for the deed, their good endeavour, as if it were perfect obedience : And therefore to haue a good Conscience, wee must bee constant in well-doing at all times, *effectū*, or *affectū*, in deed or desire, in *action* or *affection*. And that this may bee effected, we must begin betimes, put not off from day to day to turne vnto the Lord, for delay is dangerous.

And continue vnto the end, *Be thou faithfull vnto the death, and I will giue thee the crowne of glory. He that endureth vnto the end shall be saued. Incipere multarum finire paucorum* ; Many begin well, but few doe continue vnto the end : *In cassum curritur si capium iter ante terminū deferatur* ; It is in vaine to begin a iourney and not to goe forward : And therefore *S. Bernard* saith, *Sola perseverantia coronatur*, of all other vertues, onely perseuerance weares the Garland.

4. To *ἀκρίβεια*, the last word in my Text, importing Constancie, and Continuance, if wee adde *ἀκρίβεια*, the first word, which implieth diligence and exercise, then is the Circle round, or Circumference compleat. Conscience, like a vessell, may easily be kept pure and cleane, if rinsed every day ; but if it goe longer, it gathers soile and corruption, and requires more then ordinarie repentance to purge and cleanse it. Wee sinne daily, and therefore wee must

Reuel. 2.

Chrysost.

Jerom.

Bern.

must daily wash our consciences with the teares of inward sorrow and contrition, which bringeth repentance not to be repented of. This was *S. Pauls exercise*, to keepe his Conscience vnspotted, and without offence; and this must bee the daily practise of euery good Christian: Now the onely Bath or Lauacre to wash our Consciences in, is the blood of *Iesus Christ*, which cleanseth vs from all our sinnes, I say the blood of Christ applyed by faith. In which respect Faith is said to purifie the Conscience from dead workes: And *S. Paul* ioyneth them together. *Keepe faith and a good Conscience*; as if the one could not well be without the other.

1 Tim. 1-19.

Out of the flesh of man, when the body is dead, are bred those wormes which consume the flesh. Euen so from the corruption of the Conscience there breeds a worme a thousand times more terrible; euen the worme of Conscience, which euer gnaweth, and neuer dyeth.

To prevent this, we must purge the Conscience from such corruptions.

The corrup-
tions of Consci-
ence.
Ignorance.

The corruptions of the Conscience are diuers, and different.

As first, *Ignorance* and *Superstition*; against the which wee must seeke for sound and sanctified knowledge to direct vs in our generall and particular callings.

Pride.

Secondly, *Pride* and *Singularitv*; against the which apply meekenesse and humiliry, for, *Vbi humilitas, ibi sapientia*, Where humility is, there is wisdom; *Et inter sapientes sapientior qui humilior*. Amongst the wise, he is wisest that is most humble,
for

Austin.

for God resisteth the proud, but giueth grace vnto the humble.

Thirdly, *Vncharitablenesse*, and *vnrighteousnesse*, are great perverters of the Conscience; for the vncharitable and vniust man can neuer be conscionable. Against these apply those precepts of our Sauiour, *Loue thy neighbour as thy selfe*; *Whatsoeuer ye would that men should doe vnto you, euen so doe you vnto them*, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Vncharitablenesse.

Leu. 10. 27.

Fourthly, We may add to these, all the *vnruely passions* and affections of the minde; for as wilde horses ouerturne the Chariot with men and all: So the passions of the minde, if they be not tamed, ouerwhelme all iudgement and Conscience; for *Pecunia omne iudicium cum res transit in affectum*: There is no place for *Iustice*, *Iudgement*, or *Conscience*, where passion beares the sway. The best remedy against these is *moralisation* and alteration of their course, by turning their edge, as our anger against others: The *preuence* is turned when we begin to bee angry with our selues, and our owne sinnes. Our loue to the world, the edge is turned when wee begin to loue God and godlinesse, and *seeke those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*. Much might bee spoken of these things, but I draw towards an end, and will conclude with a word, or two by way of application.

Vnruly passions of the minde.

Austin.

Col. 3. 1.

It is a witty Parable which one of the Fathers bath of a man that had three friends, two whereof he loued intirely, the third but indifferently. This

Application.

Gregory in his Morals.

man being called in question for his life, sought helpe of his friends : The first would beare him company some part of his way : The second would lend him money, and afford him some meanes for his journey ; and that was all that they would or could doe for him : But the third, whom he least respected, and from whom hee least expected ; this would goe all the way, and abide all the while with him, yea, hee would appeare with him, speake, and plead for him.

My brethren, this man is every one of vs, and our three friends are the Flesh, the World, and our Conscience.

Now when death shall summon vs to iudgement, what can our friends after the flesh doe for vs ? They will bring vs some part of the way. Our Wives and Children, and our dearest friends, they will bring vs to the grave, and further they cannot goe. And of all the worldly goods which we possesse, what shall we haue ? what will they afford vs ? onely a shrowde, and a Coffin, or a Tombe at the most.

But if we have a good Conscience, this will liue and be with vs, for rather liue when we are dead ; and when we are in paine, it will appeare with vs before God, and his iudgement seat. And when neither friends nor worldly goods can doe vs good ; then a good Conscience will speake and plead for vs, yea, excuse and cleare vs.

O then my Brethren, let vs labour aboue all things to haue, and to hold, a good Conscience, keepe it as the apple of thine eye, and doe nothing

to offend it. *Aures omnium pulso, Conscientias singulorum conuenio.* I speake to the eares of all in generall, I conuent the Conscience of euery one in particular; yea, I appeale to all that heare me this day, what little regard there is made of Conscience in our age, and how few there are that follow the dictates thereof.

And therefore (O Conscience) I turne my speech vnto thee, thou art a iudge of Iudges, and one day thou shalt iudge vs all, and testifie either with vs or against vs: In the meane time, it is thy office to preach ouer my Sermon againe and againe, and to apply it to the hearts of all that heare me this day, or else my labour is but lost. Goe to all estates of persons, tell them of their duties, and put them in minde of God and thy selfe.

An Apostrophe
to Conscience.

Speake vnto those Honourable persons that sit at the Sterne of Government (either in Church, or Common-wealth) that they consult with thee in all their counsells and courses, that they preferre thee before policie, that they execute true iustice and iudgement without partialitie, or respect of persons, and that they cause others that are subordinate vnto them to doe the like.

Speake to those that are towards the Law, and other Officers in Courts of Iustice and equitie, either Ciuill or Ecclesiasticall, specially in those Courts that are of thy Iurisdiction, and haue their Denomination from thee, that they entertaine, nor maintaine bad Causes against the innocent; that they wrest not the law to terrifie their poore neighbours, and to inrangle the simple; that they spinne

not our honest intent to such length of time and costlinesse, that it may bee said (and that truly) *Confectus quos uisitem, Confusum ministerium*, The Medicine is more grievous then the maladie.

Speake to my Reverend Brethren of the Clergy, that they preach *Viva voce* (that is) *Viva & viva*, both by life and by doctrine, that they teach after a plaine and a profitable manner, not affecting craggy, curious, Scholasticall speculations, fit for the chaire then the Pulpit; nor such Roman English and sublimity of stile, that a plaine English-man cannot understand them; for our Language is now grown so learned, that a man may *clerum* in English.

Speake to the poore, that they bear their poverty with patience; and as for those that are rich, O charge them that they be not *high minded*, that they *trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God*, that they *be rich in good works, ready to distribute*, laying up for themselves a good foundation, *against the time to come*.

In a word, to conclude: Speake to all men and women, that they *fear God* and *obey him in a rightness & in truth*, that they *serve him in holiness & righteousness before him*, that they *be not vain*, that they *despise not*, that they *be soberly, righteously, and godly*, in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Iesus Christ. To whom with the Holy Ghost, shall ascription, and one immortall and eternall God, be all honour, praise and glory, forever and ever, Amen.

FINIS.